United States Department Of Agriculture | Forest Service | Shasta-Trinity National Forests

Reply To: 3420 Lat 41.78592 Lon -123.46537 Date: March 5, 1991

Subject: Biological Evaluation of POC Root Disease Risk in Baldy and Fourbear Timber Sales, Happy Camp RD (Rept. No. N91-2)

To: Forest Supervisor, Klamath National Forest

On November 19 and 20, 1990, I met with Carmine Lockwood, Rick Claypole, Bill Heitler, and Dave Tulledo from the Happy Camp District and Max Creasey, Zone Ecologist. The purpose of my visit was to view the Baldy and Fourbear salvage sales to evaluate the efficacy and planned implementation of mitigation measures to reduce the probability of introducing Phytophthora lateralis, the cause of Port-Orford-cedar root disease. The fungus is not known to occur presently on the District or in drainages from which it might spread naturally to the District.

We visited the helicopter landing H-1 at the end of Road 16N08, part of the Baldy timber sale. The haul road to this landing, 17N11, has Port-Orford-cedar (POC) adjacent to the road in a number of areas, both in drainages and scattered in the stands between drainages. POC was not visible from the landing, but it was believed that it is present on the north side (Indian Creek side) within several hundred feet. At this site we discussed the planned mitigation measures which include equipment washing, restricted season activities, outsloping roads during reconstruction, and barricading road 16N08 at the completion of the sale.

In addition to the POC along the haul road, there is POC in Fivemile Creek downslope from units 35, 39, and 42. All of these units will be harvested with helicopters and there was discussion about the measures planned for this activity, primarily equipment washing. Thorough washing of equipment that will be on the ground in the units prior to bringing it into the area will reduce the probability of introducing the fungus through this means.

Another area of discussion was equipment washing, especially the location of washing and what should be washed. Heavy equipment will be washed prior to arrival on-site. After road construction/reconstruction, logging trucks will be the primary vehicles on the haul route. The purchaser is in the Grants Pass, OR area and possibly is receiving logs from areas in Oregon where POC root disease is present. The concern is that trucks returning from the mill yard might bring the fungus back to Happy Camp after having picked up infested soil at the yard. Requiring washing of these trucks will reduce the probability of this occurring. The trucks should be washed on the Oregon side of the summit on Grayback Road. This would require the establishment of a washing station on the Siskiyou NF and monitoring that all trucks are washed before they return to the Klamath NF.

On November 20, we visited areas along Slippery Creek (Road 15N27) and Dead Horse Creek (Road 16N14) which are part of the Fourbear salvage sale. We examined the helicopter landings (one along Clear Creek and one on Road 16N14). There are no Port-Orford-cedar near the landing along Clear Creek. Several small POC are present along the road just prior to reaching the other landing. A few larger POC are above Dead Horse Creek in the same area about 75 feet from the road. We discussed the value of removing these trees before log hauling begins. A possible advantage to this would be that if infested soil were dropped off in this vicinity, there would not be any hosts to infect and, therefore, additional spores of the fungus would not be produced and spread. Because of the few trees involved, their location with respect to drainage, and other measures being taken to reduce introduction of P. lateralis, these trees do not appear to offer much threat of becoming infected or building up the fungus. The saplings along the road can provide a means of monitoring if the fungus may inadvertently be introduced. If they are found to decline from infection, they can be easily removed and the road could be closed seasonally to reduce the risk of further spread. It is unlikely that the conditions for infection will occur, however.

During our examinations, the need for compliance with the mitigation measures was repeatedly stressed. Explanation of the need for these measures with the purchaser(s) can aid in gaining their cooperation. This should be stressed at the pre-operations meetings. Sale administrators should not hesitate to shut down operations at any point if non-compliance is observed. Operations should not continue until the purchaser is in compliance.

During our travel, we came across a group of dead and dying Port-Orford-cedar along Road 17N32, a potential haul route for the Baldy salvage sale. We examined these trees for the possibility of root disease. Typical symptoms of Phytophthora lateralis infection were not found. However, there were galleries of roundheaded borers, probably a species of Semanotus, in several of the trees. Apparently there is considerable soil movement in this area which may be causing these trees to come under stress and be susceptible to attacks by these insects.

Based on my observations, the planned mitigation measures, including equipment washing, seasonal restrictions, road reconstruction requirements, and road closure, should be effective in reducing the risk of introducing P. lateralis into Happy Camp Ranger District. As mentioned previously, close sales administration is required. Also, monitoring the areas during and following the project needs to be done to assure that the fungus was not introduced.

If you have any questions about this report or require further assistance, please contact me at the Shasta-Trinity SO at 916-246-5101.

/s/ Gregg DeNitto

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